

# Safer Stockton Partnership

Agenda Item: 3  
Safer Stockton Partnership  
10 February 2015

A meeting of Safer Stockton Partnership was held on Tuesday, 16th December, 2014.

**Present:** Geoff Lee (Chair), Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Jim Beall, Dr Neville Cameron, Joanne Hodgkinson (Cleveland Police and Crime Commissioners Office), Gilly Marshall (Thirteen), Ian Coates, Helen Eustace (Cleveland Police), Jeff Evans (DTV CRC), Miriam Sigsworth (Youth Offending Team), John Bentley (Safe in Tees Valley), Steve Hume, Jane Humphreys, Julie Nixon, Caroline Wood, Claire Sills (Stockton Council), Steve McCarten (Cleveland Fire Brigade), Steve Rose (Catalyst), Kirsty Amos (Victim Support), John Bagley (National Probation Service).

**Officers:** Kerry Anderson (PH); Lisa Lyons (DNS); Peter Bell (LD).

**Also in attendance:** None.

**Apologies:** Richard Poundford, Peter Kelly, Fred Gook.

## **1 Introductions/Apologies**

Introductions and apologies were given.

## **2 Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared.

## **3 Minutes of Meeting of 11 November 2014**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 11th November 2014.

AGREED that the minutes be approved subject to some minor amendments.

## **4 Any Other Business - identification only**

The Community Safety Manager distributed a mock-up of how the SSP page will look on the new SBC website.

The Community Safety Manager reported that the Stockton Strategic Partnership held on 9th December 2014 had gone very well.

AGREED that the updates be noted.

## **5 Minutes of Safeguarding Adults Committee 14 October 2014**

The minutes of Safeguarding Adults Committee held on 14th October 2014 were noted.

## **6 Minutes of YOT Management Board 11 November 2014**

The minutes of YOT Management Board 11th November 2014 were noted.

## **7 DAAT Q2 Performance**

Members were presented with the DAAT Q2 Performance 2014/15. The report the highlighted:-

- \* Top ten substances for those in treatment
- \* Number in Treatment
- \* Successful Completions
- \* Re-presentation Rates
- \* Arrest Referral
- \* Drug Related Arrest Data
- \* Drug Rehabilitation Requirements
- \* Young People

Members felt that there was some good news within the report. Members then discussed amount of drug use in prisons and felt that it would be worthwhile to try and get the representative from Holme House to attend the Partnership.

AGREED that the report be noted.

## **8 TSVSG update**

Members received an update from Joanne Hodgkinson (Office of PCC) on the objectives of the TSVSG. It was reported that Graham Strange had been appointed to the TSVSG as a co-ordinator. Graham was carrying out a needs assessment which would change the terms of reference of the TSVSG. The Partnership was given an invite to attend a TSVSG event on 10th march 2015.

AGREED that the update be noted.

## **9 PCC Arrest Referral update**

Members were informed that Jeff Evans (DTV - CRC) had met with the PCC and this had resulted in a satisfactory conclusion with regard to the PCC Arrest Referral.

AGREED that the update be noted.

## **10 'Through the Gate' Legislation**

Members were given a presentation on the 'Through the Gate' Legislation. The presentation covered the following key areas:-

- \* Activities the courts can impose
- \* Rehabilitation Activity Requirement
- \* The ratio of licence to post sentence supervision
- \* New sentence provisions
- \* Basic Custody Screening Tool
- \* Resettlement Plan

Members were informed that the preferred provider would be confirmed on 19th December 2014.

AGREED that the presentation be received.

## **11 Police HMIC Domestic Abuse action plan update**

Members were given an update on Police HMIC Domestic Abuse action plan. A copy of the Regional Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy: One Year On was distributed for Members information. The booklet would be distributed to all LSCB's.

AGREED that the update be noted.

## **12 New Walk Project update**

Members were given an update on the New walk Project.

The Council's Housing Options Service fulfils the authority's responsibilities under homeless legislation. This included the provision of temporary accommodation to anyone whom was deemed as being potentially homeless and with a 'priority need' in respect of vulnerability. However under homeless legislation most of the residents of the New Walk project would not normally be eligible for assistance by the local authority – so if they approached the Council they would only be provided with housing advice and a list of B and B establishments.

The town Centre / Parkfield areas of Stockton had a high number of B and B establishments as large Victorian terraced properties that were ideal for this type of provision, were in abundance in these areas.

Since the contracting arrangements for asylum seeker accommodation changed a few years ago there had been a dramatic increase in the number of B and B units in Stockton as the properties owned by the previous contract holders were sold on the open market and most were bought by the largest B and B provider in the Borough.

This increase in B and B provision had met a growing demand in the Borough brought about by changes to Housing Benefit regulations which increased the age criteria for shared accommodation entitlement from 18 to 25 years to 35 years of age. This effectively meant that any single person who was in receipt of benefit would only be able to receive approximately £56 per week towards their rent in the privately rented sector. This was insufficient to access self - contained accommodation of any quality. The 'under 35 rule' did not apply in social housing but 1 bedroomed accommodation was in short supply across the Tees Valley so this was not a viable option to many especially those who had other issues such as failed previous tenancies, drug / substance misuse or a history of offending.

All of these factors had resulted in Hartington Road having an unnatural concentration of single people who were aged between 18 and 35 years of age – most of whom had chaotic lifestyles and complex issues. ASB was a major issue and as this type of accommodation was in short supply elsewhere, it attracted people from out of the area and was seen as an easy housing solution for prisoners on release from Holme House prison – whether they had a

connection to Stockton or not.

Whilst as a housing service there was no duty to provide assistance to these residents it was recognised that to do so would benefit the Borough as a whole not just the residents themselves.

Earlier this year one of the owners of the largest portfolios of B and B establishments in Stockton entered into a partnership with an organisation called New Walk. New Walk had recently attained Registered Provider status with the Government's Home and Communities Agency. This was the governing body for Registered Providers of accommodation such as Thirteen Group, Endeavour etc. The B and B owner had 'leased' his properties to New Walk and had himself become an employee of New Walk with a role of managing the properties in Hartington Road (84 units).

This partnership was driving up the standards of accommodation in the private rented sector - Registered Provider status allowed higher rents to be charged - the owner of the B and B's had limited rental income capacity as most residents were affected by the 'under-35 rule' on Housing Benefit. It also comes with an expectation for provision of good standard accommodation both in respect of bricks and mortar and service provision / management.

These new 'Registered Provider' arrangements had also provided an opportunity for the Housing Service to explore opportunities to work in partnership with New Walk and engage with the residents and address the barriers to them moving into more secure accommodation.

A successful funding bid to Public Health had enabled a second a senior officer within the Housing Options Service to work alongside New Walk and actively engage with the residents residing in the properties. The aim was to encourage and support residents to engage with treatment services, challenge behaviours and work with individuals to help them achieve better outcomes in respect of health, well-being and future prospects by effective sign posting and multi-agency working.

The longer term aim was to dilute the concentration of such vulnerable people in such a small area and it was hoped that a further years funding could be secured to continue with the project.

An Action Plan that detailed the activity and outcomes to date was presented for Members information.

Members felt that there were some good positive steps and that settled accommodation was a key issue for individuals with very complex issues.

AGREED that the update be noted.

### **13 2015/16 Meeting Dates**

Consideration was given to the 2015/16 meeting dates.

AGREED that the 2015/16 meeting dates be agreed.

**14 Reports back**  
**(a) Local Strategic Partnership**  
**(b) Adult Wellbeing Partnership**

There were no reports back.

**15 Date of next meeting - Tuesday 10 February 2015 at 9.30 a.m.**

The date of the next meeting was noted.

**16 Exclusion of the Public**

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**17 Matters Arising**  
**(a) New Counter Terrorism Legislation - for information**

Members were presented with the Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill.

AGREED that the Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill be noted.

**18 Partnership Strategic Assessment**

Members received a report that provided an overview on the key findings from the Partnership Strategic assessment (PSA). The report had been produced by Stockton Borough Council Community Safety Analyst on behalf of Safer Stockton Partnership.

AGREED that the Partnership Strategic Assessment be noted.

**19 Recorded Crime & Disorder**

Members were presented with a report that provided an overview on crime and anti-social behaviour levels in the borough of Stockton between April to November 2014.

Members agreed that the offences of violence should be an in-depth discussion at a future meeting of the Partnership.

AGREED that the report be noted.